



**Submission of the PSA Women's  
Network Committee on the Public  
Services Legislation Bill**



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The Women's Network Committee of the Public Service Association wish to make a submission on the above Bill (both written and oral).

The Public Service Association is New Zealand's largest union, having a current membership of over 75,000, 73% of whom are women. The PSA Women's Network has over 5000 members. It aims to promote the interests of women within the PSA, facilitate the sharing of information and experiences and encouraging and supporting women's participation in PSA representative structures at all levels.

A large number of our female members are employed in female dominated workforces, in roles traditionally viewed as "women's work". As a consequence, the services they provide are highly undervalued and the rates of pay significantly less than those received by men employed in positions requiring similar skills and experience.

The Public Service Association has a long and proud history of upholding women's rights and advancing the cause of gender equality. In conjunction with E Tu Union and the New Zealand Nurse's Organisation, our union played a key supportive role in the successful Equal Pay claim raised by Kristine Bartlett, caregiver, in 2017. Subsequent to that, the PSA has successfully concluded claims for DHB mental health workers and social workers at Oranga Tamariki and currently has a number of other Equal Pay claims lodged with the courts.

Over a year ago the PSA agreed the Gender Pay Principles with State services employers and the State Services Commission. The aim of the Principles is to achieve working environments in the state sector free from gender-based inequalities where:

- All employees are able to achieve their full potential regardless of their gender and
- Gender pay gaps are eliminated.

The PSA Women's Network Committee therefore believes that we are well placed to comment on aspects of this Bill related to women workers in the Public Service.

The revision of the State Sector Act 1988 is an opportunity to include the Gender Pay Principles in legislation. We want to ensure that the work underway to close the gender pay gap continues and is sustained. We seek the inclusion of the Gender Pay Principles into the new Public Service Act and support the overall PSA submission on this matter.

Many of our female members experience inequality in the workplace, and as members of the PSA women's network we feel it is our duty and responsibility to speak both collectively and as individuals, to put a personal face on the issues so many New Zealand women public servants experience.

PSA women's network members have made the following personal statements in support of the inclusion of the principles in the legislation. We asked women's network members if they supported the inclusion of the Gender Pay Principles in the new legislation (they did) and asked them to share their experiences and views on why this is important:

## Personal Statements:

Because I am sick of working so hard all the time and not being recognised.

The Gender Pay Principles are required to be enforceable and included in the new Public Services Act because it is simply unacceptable that in 2019 we are still advocating for the same rights and privileges as men. Women make up half of the world's population, we are all human, and all deserve equal pay for equal work. Furthermore, it is evidenced that paying women fairly and appropriately for work performed results in halting the poverty cycle. If women have equal access to employment opportunities, economic power and societal status, they will be able to lift their children from the cycle from the beginning. Additionally, two robust incomes are stronger than one in a family dynamic. Finally, as the public service for the Government, we are required to set the standard and lead the way. Our legitimacy for any kind of legislative changes or guidance requires us to lead by example. If we want a truly fair and gender sensitive workplace, we need to implement the policies ourselves. If New Zealand wishes to reap the benefits of being renowned as a progressive and gender equal society, we need to back it up with evidence and action.

It is extraordinarily demoralising to learn that you are earning (significantly) less than a colleague, who is ostensibly performing an equivalent role. This demoralisation leads directly to decreased performance, so there is harm both to the organisation and the individuals impacted by unequal pay. Finally, lower pay for certain professions means that individuals will choose not to join those professions, even though it might make those people happier.

The Gender Pay Gap has persisted within the Public Sector. Although some improvement has been made, a gap remains, in particular for Māori and Pasifika women. Making the Gender Pay Principles enforceable will assist in making the required outstanding improvements.

Men and Woman equally work hard in the same position of work. For men to be paid more than woman who does the same level of work is unfair.

I don't see a point in having principles like this unless they are (in law), otherwise there is a strong possibility that they won't be adhered to.

As a female in an area where the majority of employees are female, it's incredibly frustrating to see males get a higher pay and pay rise for doing the same job. And often not as well as the average female. - Most employers tend to see men as being more capable, when they're not. And they also tend to try and pit women against each other. I mean really? In this day and age...and it still happens.

The majority of public service positions are paid lower than comparable positions, at least partially due to the fact that these professions are typically female dominated. Given the value that these professions add to society this is unfair and unsustainable.

The Gender Pay Principles represent fairness and transparency. Every employee has right to be free from bias or discrimination based on their gender, they should be paid FAIRLY for what they do. By having these principles written into the Public Service Act will build a legislative framework to make it enforceable and create tangible changes for our hardworking communities.

After working for the current organisation for a number of years, 8 years to be precise, a young male European gentleman was hired by our organisation. I came across his employment contract and was shocked to see that his pay rate was \$1 or \$2 less than mine? - - Perhaps if you were to enquire you could find out for yourselves the differences in pay rates. - I am a Pacific Island woman, about 15 years older than this young man, qualified and with extensive life experience.

Because women are technically not paid as much as men and we theoretically are working for free in comparison as of beginning of November for the year. Not only does this affect Pakeha women, but especially Pasifika, Māori and other foreign immigrants and future generations of immigrants who have chosen to make New Zealand their home. It is nearly 2020, the beginning of a new decade, and it is time that fair wages were made for all genders broad spectrum.

It's very important for women who are equally doing the same jobs for less pay.

This is important as all genders do the work and deserve to be paid equally for the same jobs. As society is moving forward, women are still afraid to ask for a pay rise. This will encourage women to believe in their worth.

I have been working in this organisation for nearly ten years and one of my colleagues who is a man is paid more than I am for the same job. - I don't seem to be given the same recognition for the work I do even though I receive excellent feedback from my customers. - I am more proactive in the team I work in but my soft skills are not given any value. There is also gender and unconscious bias in this workplace.

Gender Pay/Equal Pay rights have made such progression forward in the last year. It is important to set these principles in stone by including them in this act; it shows a commitment to Gender Pay Principles, and solidifies all of the hard work over the years that has brought us to where we are now. Furthermore, it is common sense; equal pay should be enforced fairly, across the board, and including it in the Public Service Act is a vital step toward this.

Based on the role I am performing, and the responsibilities I have, I am fairly certain, my peer is on at least 10k more than I am.

We should all be treated equally no matter the gender, culture, ethnicity we are; it should be the same. This is an important issue because it is about time to enforce it. - What the male workers can do, female workers can. There should be no difference.

I believe it is imperative for social and economic development in this country that we work to abolish the gender pay gap. Coming from a background where women were paid substantially less for doing the same job (pharmacy) I believe this is an ongoing problem in Aotearoa and we need to actively be working to improve.

The gender pay gap is very prevalent in the public service salaries and has never been addressed. Current public service people and wellbeing policies emphasise and enlarge this gap through very poor shared parental care practices and exacerbated by unequal pay. It is gender discrimination towards women that needs to be eliminated from the workforce.

For years I have witnessed and experienced job discrimination against women particularly at the higher levels.

I cannot believe it is 2019 and we are still fighting for equal pay for women, but here we are! As an EA in (agency), my pay and conditions have been systematically eroded over the past 13 years. When I worked for a Judge in the late 1980s and 90s, Associates were considered an elite group, with expertise in the work of the Courts, ability to problem solve and sort out any issue so the judges could get on with their important work. Associates were known for their ability to go anywhere and do anything. We were valued for, among other things, our knowledge, experience, initiative, tact and self-motivation and we were paid accordingly. I went away to have my family and came back in 2006 to now. Our group of mostly women were recently 'sized' into a lower pay band, seemingly because we do not manage anyone and our skills and expertise are not considered valuable under the Hay methodology. Nothing has changed since the 80s in terms of know-how and can-do, except we now need to manage the various IT issues that pervade all of our lives, including while travelling on circuit. We work long hours and are dedicated to the Ministry's values of: Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence. We want the very best

for the users of our courts and are especially aware of the need for justice to be done in a timely way. That is why we work the hours we do, without overtime or time in lieu. After our sizing, we discovered we are the fourth, predominantly women, group in the Courts to have been downgraded by the (agency). We have been fighting for justice (ironic I know) ever since. What is happening in a Ministry where women lawyers are able to rise to the top of the judiciary but the women who support them are being devalued? There must be something inherently wrong with the methodology being employed and it is time for this to stop.

Women are wage earners and not necessarily married or even in de facto relationships. They work hard, and for the skills, experiences and knowledge needed to successfully perform their roles they need to be acknowledged and remunerated. - Long gone are the days where men were the main breadwinners. I am not anti men; I am just very pro women and fairness and anti discriminatory.

Any role/position an employee undertakes should be paid, rewarded, recognised for what that role entails, for its complexities, responsibilities, consequences regardless of the gender of the person completing the work. The value of a person should not be about gender, we should be valued equally as it states there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, no male and female - we are all one.

As a woman working in public service for the past decade, I can say that there is definitely a gender bias in the wages for roles. For the past 1.5 years I have been working as a recruitment coordinator at a DHB and many of the roles that pay lower wages are predominantly filled by women. Administration roles and roles working with children as the main patients fall into this category.

It is ridiculous to me that we have to even have a mandate to pay women equally. There is no question that we cannot pay a human less because of their sexual preferences or their colour. NZ gave women the first vote but still can't get it right with this. MBIE and govt needs to be leading the way. We are the ministry of business innovation and EMPLOYMENT!!!!

Gender is not a reason to pay anyone any less.

As a woman it makes my contribution feel more valued. In a time where diversity is becoming more and more important it's frustrating that we still get paid less than men. We need to ensure that this is in law and enforcement is an option so our rights are protected. As a single woman who is still worried about long term financial security, it means a lot.

Equal pay for equal work - it is the fair thing to do.

We know there is an issue with inequitable pay based on gender and ethnicity in the public service, as in many other workplaces in Aotearoa. In 2019, we need to ensure that we are actively trying to counter this, and ensure that employees are paid equally, and what they deserve. If we are to be a country that values equality, this has to happen. As a woman who works in the public service, it is degrading and demotivating to know that I am likely being paid less than what my male colleagues are being paid. This lower's productivity. If I know there is pay equality and I am being paid fairly and equitably, I am more motivated to do my job without feeling devalued every day when I come into work.

There should be equality across the board, no matter what gender you identify with. Same job, same pay.

If a person can do the same job, they should be paid the same rate. - Women are often the main income earner or sole income earner. This needs to be fair.

As a woman, I am painfully aware of the gender pay gap and how it disadvantages me. I am also aware of how much worse it is for Māori and Pasifika women (as a white woman the pay gap is not so large for me as it is for these women) and how gender equity is inextricably tied to racial justice and equality.

Because I have no idea what the gender pay gap is in my organisation.

As a public servant who is a librarian, I've seen the pay inequality across the system firsthand. We have to study to the same level, or higher, and go for jobs in just as competitive an environment as other public servants such as policy advisors, but because we work in a female-dominated profession, we get paid substantially less (half to two-thirds). I would argue that our work is just as, if not more, important as others across the state sector.

People should be paid the same/similar amount for the same job regardless of gender, ethnicity or anything else for that matter. The only thing that should change that would be different levels of experience but essentially - Same work = Same pay regardless.

This is important because I feel like I am underpaid and undervalued for the work that I do. My organisation keeps giving me a big workload and they expect me to do my best when I barely get paid anything. I get paid the least in my office. Even the people at the reception get paid more than I do even though my position is ranked higher. I also have the lowest salary in my team. It's terrible because I work so hard and yet I can barely afford to pay rent or do grocery shopping with my salary.

We need to ensure the entire public service is committed to eliminating gender and ethnic pay gaps. Our public service in Aotearoa New Zealand should be an example for all businesses and organisations to follow.

I currently work in an industry where it was traditionally female employees. There are multiple skills required; we are expected to have wide knowledge and continually update our skills and expertise, yet we are paid less than other workers often in the same facility and with less skill. There are also very few full-time roles available, which forces employees to be continually looking for extra shifts. The combination of low wages and part-time hours means there is high turn-over of staff .

Studies have shown that gender bias can play a strong role in perceptions of what constitutes adequate pay for an applicant to a new job, even amongst university students and even in science sectors. Conscious awareness of such bias and proactive treatment to eliminate it remains necessary for gender equity to be achieved in the workplace and the public sector can lead the way in this.

People should be paid fairly for the work they do. We need it clearly spelled out in legislation so we're not having to reinvent the wheel on this every time.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. We look forward to the opportunity to also make an oral submission in due course.